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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 589
By Cohen

A RESOLUTION to recognize and honor Rabbi Rafael G.
Grossman for his laudable and meritorious
service.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly honor those citizens who have wholeheartedly given of themselves in the service of their faith, dedicating their lives and careers to the spiritual welfare and enrichment of their communities; and

WHEREAS, Rabbi Rafael G. Grossman is most assuredly one such individual who is clearly deserving of this body's commendation; and

WHEREAS, Rabbi Grossman has conscientiously and steadfastly served the congregation of Baron Hirsch as Senior Rabbi for twenty-eight years and will be leaving Baron Hirsch and the Memphis area in mid-March in order to live closer to his four children and 13 grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, he has accepted the position of Rabbi of the West Side Institutional Synagogue in Manhattan, where, in addition to fulfilling his rabbinical responsibilities, he will

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present a weekly television sermon under the auspices of the Jewish Broadcasting Network;
and

WHEREAS, as Senior Rabbi of Baron Hirsch since January 15, 1974, Rabbi Rafael G. Grossman has earned the respect of his congregation and all who came in contact with him for his integrity, compassion, and dedication; and

WHEREAS, for nearly three decades, Rabbi Grossman has graciously tended to the spiritual needs of his congregation; he has led more than twenty-seven groups to Israel, seen more than 400 new families join the Baron Hirsch congregation, counseled more than 1000 individuals and families, sent over 200 young men and women to study at Yeshivot here and in Israel, officiated at more than 1500 member funerals, founded camp Darom, the only summer camp program under Orthodox auspices in the South, established a singles program that has resulted in more than 100 marriages, taught more than an average of twenty classes a week on the Torah, inspired the Baron Hirsch congregation to achieve the highest per capita sales record of Israel Bonds of any synagogue in the U.S.; and brought several hundred leading Jewish scholars and leaders to speak and lecture at Baron Hirsch; and

WHEREAS, he also oversaw the synagogue's transition from its Vollentine location to the construction of, and relocation to, the current sanctuary in the Baron Hirsch complex; and

WHEREAS, a man of stalwart commitment and great faith, Rabbi Rafael G. Grossman is the only Rabbi outside the New York area to have been elected President of the Rabbinical Council of America; and

WHEREAS, Rabbi Grossman is currently serving as Chairman of the Religious Zionists of America, the Rabbinical Council International, the National Rabbinic Cabinet, and as a Board Member of over ten national and international Jewish agencies and institutions; he has also served for five years as President of the Beth Din of America; and

WHEREAS, in gratitude of his twenty-eight years of selfless service, the Baron Hirsch Congregation is planning a tribute to Rabbi Grossman and his wife, Shirley Grossman, for April 28, 2002; and

WHEREAS, although Rabbi Rafael G. Grossman is leaving Memphis, his imprint on the Baron Hirsch will indelibly remain; his compassionate and joyful service has made a positive difference in the lives of countless Tennesseans; and

WHEREAS, Mark Wender, immediate past President and Chairman of the search committee for a new Rabbi for Baron Hirsch, has said of Rabbi Grossman that, "he has been our master teacher, and his vast knowledge has instilled in us a greater love of Torah and Judaism. Our achievements during Rabbi Grossman's tenure have been enormous and world-renowned"; and

WHEREAS, Rabbi Rafael G. Grossman epitomizes the ideal of the consummate professional, dedicated spiritual leader, and reliable friend and neighbor; a source of hope and goodwill for the members of Baron Hirsch and the Memphis community, he will be greatly missed; and

WHEREAS, Rabbi Grossman's dedication to excellence, his stalwart service to the congregation of Baron Hirsch, and his commitment to his community is clearly deserving of the respect and admiration of the members of this General Assembly; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, That we hereby honor and recognize Rabbi Rafael G. Grossman upon his twenty-eight years of meritorious service as Senior Rabbi of Baron Hirsch, commend his devotion and faith, and express our appreciation for his years of steadfast service to the Baron Hirsch congregation and the citizens of Memphis.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we wish Rabbi Grossman much joy in his new position at the West Side Institutional Synagogue and extend to him our best wishes for every success and happiness in all his future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.